



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

September 2022



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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www.westfordma.gov/tm

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**Library Design Open
House**
September 28
7:00-9:00 PM
Library Meeting Room
(See page 7)

**Proposed Center Building/
51 Main St**
**Virtual Community
Meeting**
October 6, 7:00 PM

Special Town Meeting
October 17, 7:00 PM
**Westford Academy
Gymnasium**

Dear Westford residents,

On Thursday, October 6th, at 7:00 PM, a virtual community meeting will be held to present the details and plans of the new center building being proposed to be built at 51 Main Street to replace the old fire station. This project will be considered at our upcoming Special Town Meeting. You may register to participate in this virtual meeting at the following link: [Community Meeting discussing New Center Building](#).

Our Special Town Meeting is quickly approaching and will be held on Monday, October 17th, at 7:00 PM in the gymnasium at Westford Academy located at 30 Patten Road. The Select Board recently approved the order of the articles in the warrant, and they will sign the warrant at their September 27th meeting. The board will also discuss the increased estimated costs for both the 51 Main Street building and the J.V. Fletcher Library expansion project at this meeting. The meeting timeline, warrant and motions are available on our website at the following link: [2022 Special Town Meeting](#). The following is a summary of the motions on the warrant:

Article 1 would approve unpaid bills from a previous fiscal year(s); as we have no unpaid bills, this article will be dismissed.

Article 2 will seek approval for FY23 budget appropriations as follows: \$76,500 for Westford Public Schools expenses, \$75,000 for Fire Department Personal Services, \$40,000 for Recycling expenses, \$31,403 for Police Department Personal Services, \$37,265 to reimburse the Finance Committee Reserve Fund, \$16,135 for Town Clerk expenses, \$7,500 for Assessors expenses, \$4,762 for Sealer of Weights and Measures expenses, \$3,800 for Police Department expenses, and \$40,000 appropriated from Free Cash for Fire Department expenses.

Article 3 will transfer \$12,600 from the Public Buildings Personal Services account to the Accounting account for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2023.

Article 4 will seek approval for capital appropriations as follows: \$195,000 for Boston Road Design contract amendment, \$125,000 for Beaver Brook Bridge Construction Phase services, \$40,000 to install additional fencing and selective tree removal at the property line located between the Westford Police Department and 4 Lincoln Street, \$32,317 to purchase an electric vehicle for the Assessors, and \$31,359 for a replacement hybrid vehicle for the Building Department.

Article 5 will appropriate \$12,010,000 for the construction of a new municipal building located at 51 Main Street and related expenses. This is a debt exclusion also subject to town ballot approval at our November 8th election. We are recommending \$1,000,000 in Free Cash be allocated to this project to lower the borrowing.

Article 6 will appropriate \$32,546,009 for the J.V. Fletcher Library Expansion project located at 50 Main Street. This is also a debt exclusion and subject to town ballot approval at our November 8th election. The town is eligible for a grant of \$7,851,994 from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to help fund this project. Given the unprecedented increase in Library building project costs, thirteen Commonwealth libraries with grant-funded building projects - including Westford's - are reaching out to the Governor and State Legislators to request they designate unappropriated state ARPA funds or state surplus funds to these projects in the upcoming October supplementary budget.

(Continued on next page)

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westford CAT
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Article 7 will transfer available funds to reduce the net amount raised by taxes in FY 2023.

Article 8 will decrease the membership of the Affordable Housing Trust Committee from 11 members to 9.

Article 9 will amend Zoning Bylaw Section 3.3 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) to allow for a transfer of the special permit upon a change in ownership (currently it terminates), to simplify standards by allowing ADUs up to 900 square feet (allowable area is currently based on calculations), and to list more purposes for ADUs.

Article 10 will amend Chapter 48.1 of the General Bylaws to change the name of the Tax Possession Sale Committee to the Tax Possession Disposition Committee.

Article 11 will authorize the Select Board to sell two parcels of land, Assessor's Map 78, Parcel 75 located at 20 Pine Tree Trail and Assessor's Map 78, Parcel 76 located at 31 Byrne Avenue.

Thank you to all who attended our Strategic Planning Retreat at Kimball Farm earlier this month. We had 246 attendees on a beautiful evening under the tent, and we shared information about many current town projects and initiatives.



At the Select Board's most recent meeting, the board approved the wording for and order of our Town Election ballot questions for the Town Election on Tuesday, November 8th. You may view the ballot questions at the following link: [Ballot Questions for the Town Election Warrant](#).

At the board's meeting on August 23rd, Town Engineer, Paul Starratt, presented Town Hall Parking Lot Expansion Project recommendation to add 34 parking spaces to the Town Hall parking lot. The board approved proceeding with the next phase which includes Planning Board hearings and an estimate of costs, which will be brought to the Capital Planning Committee and 2023 Annual Town Meeting. To view a copy of the plans, please visit the following link: [Town Hall Parking Revised Concept Plans](#).

At that same meeting, the Board approved the Parks and Recreation Commission releasing a Request for Information (RFI) to build and operate a Recreation and Aquatics Center. The purpose of this request is to seek information how a private or nonprofit entity would develop and operate a recreation and aquatics center in Westford. To view a copy of the RFI, please visit the following link: [Bid Postings](#).

The Select Board continue to review funding requests for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The Select Board approved the following requests at their last two meetings in the amount of \$140,590.26:

- \$ 90,000.00 for the assessment/addition of town and school security camera systems
- \$ 20,594.00 for additional town and school emergency training
- \$ 8,457.06 for supplemental funding for a Chevy Silverado
- \$ 1,539.20 for supplemental funding for a Ford E Transit Cargo Van
- \$ 20,000.00 for a senior dental program for uninsured residents age 55+

ARPA project summaries are available to view at the following link: [ARPA Funding](#).

(Continued on next page)

As a result of Town Meeting's vote to award Community Preservation Act funds to the development of the Helena Crocker Residences, the Select Board voted to approve an Affordable Housing Restriction for the project.

In preparation for my retirement effective Tuesday, January 3rd, 2023, the Select Board hired Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) as the executive search firm to assist with the new Town Manager recruitment. MRI will work with the Town Manager Search Committee to actively recruit, evaluate, interview and refer qualified candidates to our Select Board by early December.

Free iHealth Covid-19 Self-Test Kits are available to residents while supplies lasts. Each kit contains two self-tests and may be picked up at the following locations, Council on Aging, J.V. Fletcher Library, and Health Department in Town Hall.

On July 21st, the Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) declared a Level 3 – Critical Drought in our region. To learn more about the drought status, please visit the following link: [Drought Management in Massachusetts](#). As a result of continued drought conditions and an increased demand on water, the Outdoor Water Use Restrictions remains at Stage III. For more information, please visit the following link: [Stage III Outdoor Water Use Restriction](#)

The Select Board recently recognized the following:

- Our Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Safety Telecommunicators for their extraordinary efforts during the house fire which took place on Saturday, August 13th at 54 Lake Shore Drive North
- Stony Brook Middle School student, Hailey Campbell, who has been selected to play futsal on Team USA Futsal – 12-year-old team

It is with deep great regret I share that Jeff Stephens, our former Health Director, passed away recently due to a serious illness. Jeff worked for our town for several years leaving last fall for a new position in Leominster, his hometown. Jeff was an extremely kind person who was passionate about his service to our town. He was wonderful to work with, made many friends here in Westford, and he was instrumental in getting us through the early days of COVID-19. The Select Board and I extend our deepest sympathies to the Stephens' family. Jeff will be missed.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 35 Town Farm Road Task Force, Affordable Housing Trust, Agricultural Commission, Board of Cemetery Commissioners, Capital Planning Committee, Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Commission on Disability, Communications Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Council on Aging, Cultural Council, Dog Park Task Force, Economic Development Committee, Election Officer, Finance Committee, Healthy Westford Committee, Housing Authority, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee, Tax Possession Sale Committee, and Town and School Safety Task Force. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

I hope to see you at our Special Town Meeting on October 17th at 7:00 p.m. at the Westford Academy Gym.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross

From the Moderator



Please join me for our Special Town Meeting on October 17 at Westford Academy starting at 7:00 pm. This should be a relatively short meeting but your attendance is important as we vote on some very significant issues including funding for reconstruction of a new municipal building at 51 Main Street and the expansion project at the J. V. Fletcher Library. Please see the Town Moderator's page at the Town of Westford website to sign up for free transportation and for more details about the Articles we will be voting on. This will be our first meeting inside at Westford Academy and there will be plenty of parking and a family friendly area across the hall if you want to bring the kids and would like to have a little more space. We will have Meeting Mentors available throughout the meeting to answer your questions off line and I hope to wrap up by 9:00 pm. Come for all or part of the meeting and share in the governance of our community. **DEMOCRACY WORKS BEST WHEN THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE PARTICIPATE!**

Stormwater

How to Properly Get Rid of Fallen Leaves & Yard Waste

Leaves and yard waste **CLOG** storm drains which can cause **FLOODING** and can also be a significant source of stormwater **POLLUTION**.

Leaves, grass clippings, and other debris from your lawn that end up in our **STREETS, SIDEWALKS**, and **STORM DRAINS** will eventually make their way into local **STREAMS, PONDS**, and **LAKES** which can cause serious water quality issues like **ALGAE BLOOMS**.

Properly dispose of yard waste by:

- *Mulching into lawns with your mower*
- *Bag for curbside pick-up*
- *Use in compost piles*

Never:

- *Blow into the street*
- *Dump into wetlands or waterbodies*
- *Rake into drainage ditches*
- *Put into regular trash containers*
- *Burn*



However you get rid of leaves and yard waste, make sure you **KEEP THEM OUT OF THE STORM DRAIN**.

For more information on Yard Waste Collection visit the Westford Recycling Commission webpage at:

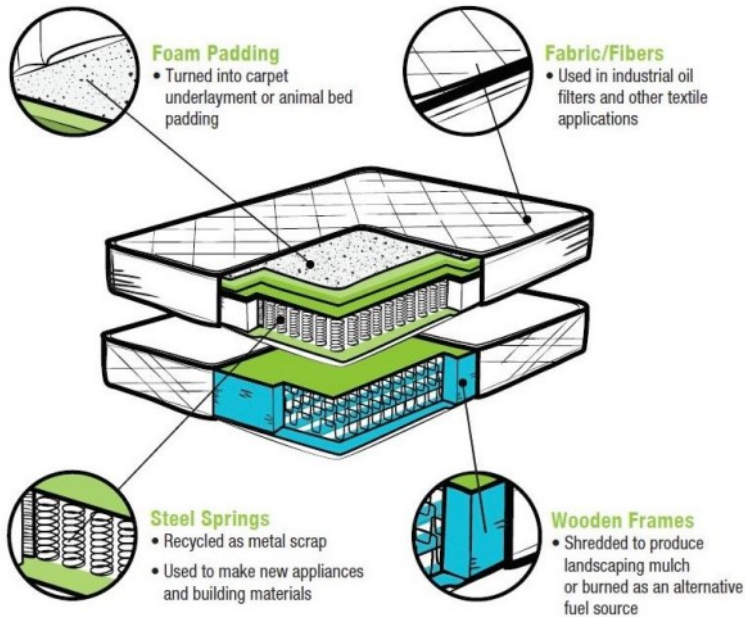
westfordma.gov/recycling

Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

Strategic Planning Retreat

There were a lot of great discussions about how the town is working to incorporate sustainability principles into decision making and planning functions at the Strategic Planning Retreat last week. If you missed it, you can watch the recording [here](#). Several of the projects discussed will come before Town Meeting on October 17th. Please attend and make your voice heard!

Mattress, Box Spring and Textile Waste Bans to take Effect November 1st



Mattresses and textiles (anything cloth) will be banned from the trash and incinerator starting November 1st per order of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Most mattresses and box springs, and textiles, can be reused or recycled, rather than burned, where they contribute to carbon dioxide emissions. Westford Bulk stickers will no longer be accepted on mattresses and box springs, as the majority of mattresses are recyclable.

Fortunately, Westford residents are already familiar with many ways to donate and recycle both mattresses and textiles when they no longer need them, and often have their old mattresses removed when new ones are delivered. If you need a refresher, please visit the [Recycling Commission's comprehensive How to Recycle Most Everything document](#) for additional information.

Finally, while we all look for new energy and inspiration in the fall, sometimes at the mall or online, please think carefully about what will truly bring you joy and utility this season, and save yourself the trouble of finding a new owner for that unused item of clothing next year.

Things to do this month:

If you drive an older gasoline powered vehicle, remember to turn off your engine. As you adopt a new fall schedule, try to sneak in some healthy down time for you and your engine in those few minutes in between tasks and destinations.

In 2015, the US Department of Energy estimated that idling from heavy-duty and light duty vehicles combined wastes about 6 billion gallons of fuel annually. [In this document](#), they continue: "About half of that is attributable to personal vehicles, which generate around 30 million tons of CO2 every year just by idling. While the impact of idling may be small on a per-car basis, the impact of the 250 million personal vehicles in the U.S. adds up. For saving fuel and reducing emissions, eliminating the unnecessary idling of personal vehicles would be the same as taking 5 million vehicles off the roads." Westford can be proud of the fact that as a town, we have implemented many of the DoE's policy recommendations. As individuals and families, think of the money, gasoline and carbon you could save by changing this one habit!

Perhaps more importantly, turning off your engine is a health prevention measure. The health effects of air pollution from vehicles have been linked to cancer and decreased life expectancy. National Geographic Magazine dedicated their April 2021 issue to research on this topic, highlighting the work of this [Harvard Biostatistician](#) and [The Guardian](#) has produced a new podcast and related article this month.

September at the J.V. Fletcher Library

From the Director: J. V. Fletcher Library...

Building the Future!

Westford has received a provisional grant award from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) that it is now in line for \$7,851,944 million of state grant funds under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The community has six months to approve the future Library Building Addition and Renovation Project and critical votes will occur at:



📖 October 17, 7 PM - Special Town Meeting, Westford Academy Gymnasium

📖 November 8 – Local Ballot Vote on a Debt Exclusion

Two Library Planning Grants – the *Planning and Design Grant* and the *Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program Grant* -- spanned 2014 through 2016, and were preceded by years of preparation and planning before their 2017 submittal date. Town Meeting has voted four times to support this library project dating back to March 2012, and Commonwealth grant funding is finally available.

The future design devotes almost all new space to the public and to the residents who use it most. The Library design:

- 📖 More than doubles the space for children**
- 📖 Triples the space for tweens/teens and emerging adults**
- 📖 Doubles public meeting spaces**
- 📖 Centralizes Circulation functions**
- 📖 Increases silent, tutorial and collaborative study options**
- 📖 Offers improved technology & spaces to accommodate future trends and community use**
- 📖 Offers improved traffic flow & increased parking**
- 📖 Is fully handicapped-accessible and meets current fire, safety and building codes, and is planned for Net 0**
- 📖 Retains the historic façade on Westford Common while offering a modern rear addition**

The Library Construction Grant represents an opportunity to build a flexible, sustainable library with almost \$8 million dollars of grant funding. Local costs are being re-estimated for 2024 construction, and will be smoothed into the Town's future debt schedule for minimal tax impact, replacing old paid-off debt.

Learn more about the [Library Building Project](https://www.westfordlibrary.org).

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September at the J.V. Fletcher Library (Continued)

Library Design Open House: Wed., Sept. 28, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Join the Library Trustees, Library Director, Building Sub-Committee and Sustainability representatives, as they present the future Library Building design, plans, renderings and schematics in a give- and take- public forum in the Library Meeting Room. Attendees and drop-ins may join a tour of the current library on the half-hour starting at 7:30 p.m., 8:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.

Fall Story Times: We offer a variety of small group (under 20 kids) story times for children this fall that take place in the Meeting Room. To accommodate a wider variety of participants there will be no registrations or reservations. Plan to arrive early - before the start of small group Story time. Go to the Children's Desk and ask for a Story time ticket for each child to claim your spots in the story time. Your options for story time are Book Bunch for kids ages 2-4 on Tuesdays at 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.; Book Worms for kids ages 3-5 on Tuesdays at 1:15 - 1:45 p.m.; and Wiggle Words for ages 2-4 on Wednesdays at 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Please see the [web-site for descriptions](#) of story times.

Youth Services Book Club Online Registration: Online registration for these programs is ongoing. Book clubs are open to Westford residents and non-resident Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library. Book clubs are for grades Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4 and 5 (combined) and meet once a month from 4 to 4:45 p.m. The Non-Fiction Book Club is for kids in grades 3 and 4 and meets once a month on Monday afternoon. The Art Book club is for kids in grade 3 to 5 and meets once a month on a Thursday afternoon. The NEW Graphic Novel Book Club meets on Mondays and is for kids in grades 4 and 5. Please see the [website for descriptions](#) of our book clubs.

Crafternoon: Mon., Sept. 19 from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Tweens & Teens - Join Jess for an afternoon of crafting and creating. Please e-mail jdymment@westfordma.gov if you have any questions. [Register here.](#)

Blanchard Middle School Book Club: Every third Tuesday 2:00-3:00 p.m.: Join Jess and Mrs. Brandt after school in the Learning Commons. We'll discuss a different book each meeting - **please have your J.V. Fletcher Library card info on hand at the first meeting on 9/20.**

VIRTUAL JOB SEARCH HELP FOR 50 & OVER – Develop Your Resumes Part 2: Wed., Sept. 21, 9:30-11:30 a.m. The Massachusetts Library Collaborative's 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, from 9:30am to 11:30am, via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you! [Register here.](#)

Math Club: Wednesdays on 9/21, 10/26, 11/23, and 12/28 from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Join YA Librarian Jess and library volunteer Patrick for a meeting of mathematical minds. Each meeting we will learn theories, solve problems, and build upon your math knowledge with fun activities and games. For Grades 6-8. [Register here.](#)

Mother Goose Story Time: Monday AND Thursday Mornings Starting Sept. 26 from 10:30 -11:15 a.m. Twice a week in the Meeting Room! This is a great early literacy program for you and your littlest ones. Get them started with reading fundamentals like rhymes, finger plays, and stories. If the weather cooperates, we may hold some sessions outside. This story time will be limited to 20 participants (not including adults) when held inside. [Please consult the web site for more information on how to secure a spot for your child.](#)

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September at the J.V. Fletcher Library (Continued)

Monday Mystery Book Club: Mon., September 26 at 2:00 p.m. We'll meet in the Meeting Room. We'll be discussing *The Lighthouse* by P.D. James. Print copies are available at Main Desk, and the ebook and digital audiobook are on Overdrive. Email Kristina at kleedberg@westfordma.gov for details.

Pajama Story Time: Mon., Sept. 26 at 6:30 p.m. Pajama Time meets once a month on a Monday evening in the Meeting Room for children ages 3 to 7. Get into those pajamas and grab a favorite stuffed animal or blanket and come on in!

Friends of the Library e-newsletter: The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs – Adults](#)

[Programs – Kids](#)

[Programs – Young Adults](#)

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300

or send us an email at westfordlibrary@westfordma



Cameron Senior Center

Upcoming Happenings at the Cameron for Adults 55+



Cameron's Upbeat Band practicing for their next performance.

Salem and Rockport Trip

Thursday, October 6, 9:00am

Travel on a luxury Silver Fox Coach for historic Salem. Long renowned as a famous seaport, Salem later became infamous for the witch trials. You'll initially tour the Peabody Essex Maritime Museum located in historic Salem, Massachusetts. Explore over 200 years of maritime trade from the Massachusetts' North Shore and view the museum's world



class collection from the Far East and beyond. This

blending of past and present is evident as you stroll the tree lined streets and cobbled walkways. Authors, painters, and poets have drawn inspiration from this fabled seaside city. You will enjoy a delicious luncheon across the street at Village Tavern, featuring an entrée' choice of Fresh Baked Haddock or Baked Chicken and a Dessert. After lunch you'll visit scenic Rockport, Massachusetts, with its collection of fine shops and beautiful seaside views. Your return time home will be 6:00 PM after a great tour on the scenic Massachusetts North Shore. Cost of the tour is \$109.00 per person.



Holiday Assistance Program for Town Residents

The Cameron Senior Center is partnering with SVdP Society of St. Catherine's Church and the Westford Food Pantry for the Westford Holiday Basket Program. This program serves Westford families and individuals who would like to cook a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal that are facing a financial hardship. If you need assistance this holiday season, please contact Alison Christopher, L.I.C.S.W. The Town Social Worker at 978.399.2325. If you are interested in donating to the program, please contact Katie Russell at 978.399.2330.



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Cameron Senior Center (Continued)

Dementia Caregiver Support Group to resume in September with new co-leaders!

Joanne Fontaine RN and Lisa Sobhian LICSW have been co-facilitating a support group for many years with the Alzheimer's Association. Joanne is a Geriatric Care Manager, owner of Pro-Active Eldercare. Lisa is an Alzheimer's Specialist and is currently the Director of Dementia Services and Social Services at D'Youville Life & Wellness Community. The group will meet at Cameron on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 6-7PM. Please call Lisa before attending your first meeting at 978-808-4246.

It's Time for the Annual Trivia Go-Go

Tuesday, October 25th at 5:30PM



Our infamous Ken presents, "Trivia with a Twist". There will be special games for extra points, unique team selection and champion prizes. Doors open at 5:30 for desserts and trivia begins at 6:00. All this for \$3.00. Sure to be a great time! Don't miss the fun; sign up by 10/19. 978-692-5523.

Grief Support Group– for Westford residents 55+

Second and Fourth Thursday of each month

We have heard from residents that a local grief support group would be appreciated. While grief can impact individuals in different ways, connecting with others to share stories, experiences, and receive/offer support can help with the grieving process. Please join us if you have suffered a loss and are seeking a safe place to express your feelings, to feel heard, to learn about the grieving process and to obtain helpful coping materials and resources. These "drop in" groups will be offered on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 4:00 here at the Cameron *however please call to speak with Annette prior to your first visit*. There is no fee and no required attendance. Call Annette at 978-692-5523.

Next Hike with Mike Woesner and some awesome Cameron hikers is on September 26th at Stone Arch Bridge, 115 Cold Springs Road. 2.2 mile hike begins at 9AM and expect approximately a two-hour hike. Water bottle, sturdy footwear and insect repellent recommended. RSVP to 978-692-5523. Join Us!

To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit:

www.westfordma.gov/coa,
[www.facebook.com/Cameron Senior Center](https://www.facebook.com/Cameron-Senior-Center)
www.youtube.com or simply call
 978-692-5523.



**To view the complete
 Council On Aging Newsletter
 please visit [Newsletters](#)
 on our web page.**

Health Department

Westford Residents,

Through ARPA funding we are proud to announce that we will be reviewing applications for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 for a \$400 credit per child for the Recreation Department After School Program (starting August 31st, 2022). Eligibility for this program is income and Westford residency based. If have previously received ARPA funding this year for summer assistance or after-school care, you will not be eligible to apply. Applications should be emailed to bnash@westfordma.gov or hand-delivered to the Westford Town Hall, Health Department Attn: Brittany Nash. Applications are funded on a first-come, first basis. Please make sure to read carefully through the application and send in the required documents, incomplete applications will be delayed. If your application is approved, you and the Westford Recreation Department will be notified. Once you are notified you will receive further instructions regarding the next steps in the process. This application is confidential within the Town Departments approving and administering these funds. The information in this application will be used to determine your family's eligibility for assistance based on your present gross household income that falls at or below 300% of the federal poverty level (see the income eligibility chart).

Additional income information must accompany your application and can be found on page 7 of the application. If you are interested in seeing if you qualify for assistance, the application can be found by clicking [After School Care Application](#)

If you have any questions, need assistance, or require an application in another language, do not hesitate to contact Brittany Nash at (978) 399-2564 or bnash@westfordma.gov.

Thank you

Income Eligibility Chart-300%FPL	
Household	Gross Annual Income Limit for Household
2	\$54,930
3	\$69,090
4	\$83,250
5	\$97,410
6	\$111,570

Health Department (Continued)

Below is an updated table of positive COVID cases (**state reported only**) in Westford. These case counts do not include home tests. Home test results are not reported to the state or local Health Departments. Our department is currently preparing for our scheduled flu clinics. Please check our website and Facebook page for more information.

We will continue to see increases and decreases in positivity rates as the variants change over time, as more people gather indoors and travel. Some variants emerge and disappear while others persist. New variants will continue to emerge and mutate as the virus changes. The current variant of concern is highly infectious, but case studies are showing that the symptoms are mild in most cases. Most positive cases are reporting a temporary fever or no symptoms at all. Several current cases are reporting that they did not know they had COVID19; (no sign of symptoms) and have tested negative several times before being positive.

We want to remind employees and residents to stay up to date on their vaccinations, use prevention measures to decrease the risk of developing any viruses. Being up to date on recommended vaccines is effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death.

Please continue to practice good handwashing, utilizing hand sanitizer when you are unable to wash your hands, stay home if you are sick and get tested if you think you have COVID or the FLU. Practice social distancing when able and wear a mask in an indoor crowded space. Currently, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Westford Board of Health are not requiring any additional mask covering measures. They are encouraging all residents to practice social distancing and continue maintaining their vaccination status.

If you test positive for COVID19 or if you are exposed to someone with COVID19, please follow the below Isolation and Quarantine guidance.

Free COVID Test Kits for all Residents: You can pick up free test kits at The Westford Health Department, the J.V. Fletcher Library, and the Cameron Senior Center.

	<u>2022</u>
January	1,146
February	128
March	69
April	228
May	444
June	177
July	162
August	127
September	19 as of 9/12/2022

(Continued on next page)

Health Department (Continued)

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Isolation and Quarantine Guidance Information

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-isolation-and-quarantine-guidance-for-the-general-public>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health-COVID Updates

<https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information>

The Bivalent vaccine is currently available at CVS and Walgreens in Westford. You can also contact your health provider or The Health Department

Where can I get a booster vaccine?

[https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine?](https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine?utm_source=google&utm_campaign=generalvaxrelaunch&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_term=rsa&utm_content=ad1_english)

[utm_source=google&utm_campaign=generalvaxrelaunch&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_term=rsa&utm_content=ad1_english](https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine?utm_source=google&utm_campaign=generalvaxrelaunch&utm_medium=paidsearch&utm_term=rsa&utm_content=ad1_english)

Who is eligible to receive a single booster dose and when:

- Individuals 18 years of age and older are eligible for a single booster dose of the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine, Bivalent if it has been at least two months since they have completed primary vaccination or have received the most recent booster dose with any authorized or approved monovalent COVID-19 vaccine.
- Individuals 12 years of age and older are eligible for a single booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, Bivalent if it has been at least two months since they have completed primary vaccination or have received the most recent booster dose with any authorized or approved monovalent COVID-19 vaccine.

FDA authorizes Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine for Booster Dose

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-moderna-pfizer-biontech-bivalent-covid-19-vaccines-use>

COVID Related Relief Assistance for Qualifying Low to Moderate Income Households

<https://westfordma.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1315>

Application:

<https://westfordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10895/ARPA-application-final-2-2022?bidId=>

COVID19 Test Kit and Testing Resource Information

<https://www.mass.gov/news/covid-19-over-the-counter-otc-testing-kits-updated-2422>

Westford Health Department webpage

westfordma.gov/Health

Please call the Health Department if you have any questions at 978-692-5509.

Rae Dick BS. CP-FS Health Director

UMV MRC Director

Westford Health Department

Health Department (continued)

Mental Health Literacy Community Training

with Mental Health Collaborative



A critical training to help you support
your own mental health and the
mental health of your loved ones.

September 28th, 2022, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Stony Brook Middle School Auditorium
9 Farmer Way, Westford, MA 01886

Sponsored by Lowell, Dracut, Westford,
and Acton Health Departments

For further questions,
contact Brittany Nash
bnash@westfordma.gov



Health Department (continued)



Free Narcan Training

Date: October 12th, 2022

Time: 7-9 PM

Location: Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, MA 01720

Room 204

Or

Virtually by emailing

bnash@westfordma.gov



Learn how to prevent an opioid overdose

Learn how to administer Narcan

Light refreshments will be provided

Did you know that according to the Department of Public Health
In Massachusetts 2,290 confirmed and estimated opioid-related
overdose deaths occurred in 2021

Health Department (continued)

NAVIGATING a mental health **CRISIS**



WARNING SIGNS of Suicide

- ◆ Giving away personal possessions
- ◆ Talking as if saying goodbye or going away forever
- ◆ Taking steps to tie up loose ends, like organizing personal papers or paying off debts
- ◆ Making or changing a will
- ◆ Collecting and saving pills or buying a weapon
- ◆ Saying things like "Nothing matters anymore," "You'll be better off without me"
- ◆ Withdrawing from friends, family and normal activities
- ◆ Increasing drug or alcohol use

WHAT TO DO if You Suspect Someone is Thinking About Suicide

If you notice warning signs, or if you're concerned someone is thinking about suicide, don't be afraid to talk to them about it.



START the conversation by sharing specific signs you've noticed, like:

"I've noticed lately that you [haven't been sleeping, aren't interested in soccer anymore, are posting a lot of sad song lyrics online, etc.] ..."



Then say something like:

- ✓ "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- ✓ "Do you have a plan?"
- ✓ "Do you know how you would do it?"

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," seek help immediately.

- ◆ Don't leave them alone and stay calm
- ◆ Call their therapist or other health care professional
- ◆ Remove potential means, such as weapons and medications
- ◆ Call the National Suicide Prevention Line at 1-800-273-8255 or call 911
- ◆ If the situation is life-threatening, call 911 and ask for someone with mental health experience to respond, like a Crisis Intervention Team.

**LISTEN, EXPRESS CONCERN,
REASSURE**

"I may not understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help."

"I'm concerned about you and I want you to know there is help to get you through this."

"You are important to me; we will get through this together."

Community Health and Wellness

The Town of Westford has a new **Mobile Clinician** who is supported through ARPA funding.

How does the Westford Mobile Clinician work?

If you, a loved one or fellow community member is experiencing a mental health challenge and currently awaiting care, Westford may be able to help. The Town of Westford acknowledges an overwhelming need for mental health appointments, resulting in long waitlists. We want to help shorten this wait time by offering short – term mobile clinical services in Town buildings to those in need.

Am I eligible to receive Westford Mobile Clinician services?

Following an initial intake interview, you may be provided with one of the following recommendations:

- immediate recommendation to call your doctor, or 911;
- assistance locating the correct mental health provider for you; or/and referral to the Westford Mobile Clinician.

Each individual and situation is unique so careful consideration will be given when determining if the Westford Mobile Clinician is right for you. Due to scope of service and ACA ethical guidelines there may be situations where this service is not suitable for all residents and employees. If it is determined the Mobile Clinician is not a fit, we will work with you on alternative services.

What is the cost to me? Will my insurance be charged?

Services are provided free of charge. Your health insurance will not be charged for this service.

What is the frequency of treatment being offered?

Three sessions will be offered, with a plan for review at the third session. There will be a maximum of four to six sessions provided. The clinician will determine the number and frequency of sessions following the initial appointment. Determining factors may include nature of the mental health issue; length of time estimated for private therapy to begin; and/ the client's response to therapy. Specifics will be discussed at your intake screening visit.

The Mobile Clinician is a new service in Westford. Depending upon the need of the service, a waitlist may be created. If there is a waitlist, during the intake process the waitlist process will be explored.

The Mobile Clinician is an important service for the town residents. As a responsibility of the resident, if you are unable to attend an appointment, please call the Mobile Clinician at least 48 hours of your appointment to cancel and/or reschedule.

Who do I contact to complete an intake?

Nicole Laviolette, Town of Westford Community Wellness Coordinator 978-399-2503

Alison Christopher, Town of Westford Social Worker 978-399-2325



Westford Public Schools

This year kicked off with a lot of energy. The WA Marching Band and Color Guard woke all of the teachers up first thing Monday morning with a phenomenal surprise performance during our Opening Day Staff Meeting. They were able to cheer and celebrate all of the different schools that they attended reminding everyone throughout the district that we have contributed in different ways to their journeys. The extended ovation following their performance was clearly an expression of the overwhelming pride and appreciation the entire staff felt seeing all of their students both past and present fill the PAC with joyful music. Being able to bring all of the staff members from each school together in one place again was inspiring and hopeful.

Tuesday gave the 6th and 9th graders an opportunity to have orientation activities in the morning and let them have the schools all to themselves to better acquaint themselves with schedules and directions in the new buildings.

This first September morning was a fantastic way to greet the second day of classes for most of our students and the third day for our 6th and 9th graders. With pre-K and Kindergarten orientation opportunities taking place in small groups yesterday and today, all of the classrooms throughout the district have been bustling with activity. As we visited all of the schools over these past two days, it has been rejuvenating to interact with so many students again. Teachers shared the joy of recognizing more familiar first day energies from the students than in the past two years. While normal is still yet to be defined, familiar is certainly optimistic.

We observed increasing enthusiasm and some unbridled joy in every school in the district. It warmed our hearts considerably knowing that joy should be commonplace and an expectation in any environment filled with students. Every building had students excited to be back enjoying the next rung up the ladder of seniority as well as others taking in the new surroundings as the youngest grades in each building explored with curiosity and eagerness.

Creative problem solving and critical thinking skills were being exercised right away around every corner. Sometimes by the students...sometimes by the teachers.

Now that school traffic is back in season it's time to start thinking again about the impact of all of these vehicles in congested areas. Fortunately, many vehicles now have automatic stop features to reduce unnecessary engine idling. Please remember to use those features and or turn your vehicle off when waiting in line so that we can reduce idling around the schools.

Sincerely,

Chris

Dr. Christopher Chew
Superintendent
Westford Public Schools



Recycling Commission

Mattress and Box Spring Waste Ban Effective November 1st



As of November 1, 2022, a new Massachusetts policy bans any *re-useable* mattress and/or box spring from the trash.

Massachusetts residents and businesses discard about **600,000** mattresses and box springs annually. There is a need to reduce the amount of re-useable items that go in landfills.

More than **75%** of mattress components can be easily disassembled and recycled. The materials they are made of can be used to manufacture a variety of new products. For example: box springs and steel inner springs can be made into new steel; mattress foam can be ground up, mixed with binders, and formed into carpet padding or cushions; fabrics and fibers can be recycled

into industrial filters or padding; and box spring foundation wood may be chipped and used as animal bedding, mulch, or biomass fuel.

The options for residents to dispose of their re-usable mattress include giving the old mattress/box spring to the company that delivers a new one; donating it to a charity; or offering it to a recycler.

Resources: www.westfordma.gov/recycling; www.recyclesmartma.org; www.mass.gov/service-details/mattress-recycling

The Westford Recycling Commission (WRC) is Observing the Waste Management Audit of our Recycling

Waste Management (WM), our recycling contractor, is conducting an 11 day composition audit for our recycling for the purposes of breaking down and measuring all components of our recycling material stream. This is done in a hands-on method of a sample from each day's collection. This will be completed on September 15, 2022 and actual results will be published in the October Town Manager's newsletter. Overall, it looks good at this point in that residue (material not accepted for recycling) is well less than the threshold of 10%. Based on the results we have seen to this date we have the following two important tips – A complete list of tips will be published in October.



1. **DO NOT** put mixed recycling (paper, bottles, cans, etc.) inside a paper bag. With WM's automated process, this bag could be crushed and treated as residue as it is not identifiable. **IT IS OKAY TO FILL A BAG WITH PAPER ONLY.**
2. **DO NOT** put plastic bags or packaging material in your recycling. They are not accepted curbside – those items are accepted in TREX recycling for these items at places such as Whole Foods (front of store).

WRC applauds the residents of Westford as we collectively are doing a very good job with the recyclable mix collected curbside.

Veterans Services

The community is invited to visit...



THE WALL THAT HEALS

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL REPLICA & MOBILE EDUCATION CENTER



A PROGRAM OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND
FOUNDERS OF THE WALL



Hosted by VA Bedford Healthcare System

200 Springs Rd, Bedford, MA

Open 24 hours | September 22 - 25, 2 p.m.

Free admission

For details, please scan the QR code, call 781-687-3076, or visit
www.va.gov/bedford-health-care/programs/the-wall-that-heals



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Bedford Healthcare System

2022 Planning Retreat - Held on September 8th

